

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-02 USIA-15

PRS-01 SP-02 CU-04 HEW-06 /081 W

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R 251834Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5527

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 30757

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: FEN IS JOINING IFFTU

1. SUMMARY: FEN WILL JOIN IFFTU AND WILL ATTEND IFFTU WORLD CONGRESS IN FLORENCE. FEN HAS SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING GOF RECOGNITION AS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, THEREBY BECOMING SIXTH SUCH UNION IN FRANCE. FEN DOES NOT INTEND TO DO ANY ORGANIZING OUTSIDE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION WHICH EMPLOYS ITS 550,000 MEMBERS. END SUMMARY.

2. FEN (FEDERATION D'EDUCATION NATIONALE), FOURTH LARGEST LABOR ORGANIZATION WITH 550,000 MEMBERS GROUPED IN 42 UNIONS, HAS APPLIED AND HAS BEEN ASSURED OF ADMISSION BY THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FREE TEACHERS UNIONS. ACCORDINGLY, FEN HAS BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND THE IFFTU CONGRESS IN FLORENCE IN DECEMBER. IN FACT FEN WAS ASKED TO PREPARE AN INTRODUCTORY REPORT WHICH STRIKES US AS A RATHER UNUSUAL

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PROCEDURE SINCE FEN IS NOT OFFICIALLY YET A IFFTU

MEMBER.

3. ANDRE HENRI, FEN SECRETARY GENERAL, TOLD U.S. AND UK LABOR COUNSELORS THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED BY THE OPPORTUNITY FEN WILL HAVE TO PLAY A ROLE IN IFFTU AND THUS CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF THIS IMPORTANT ITS. FOR SOME TIME NOW HE HAS BEEN CONCERNED BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE CORRESPONDING WFTU (COMMUNIST) TEACHERS ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN DOMINATING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF TEACHERS TO THE POINT THAT IT BEGAN TO LOOK AS THOUGH THIS WAS THE ONLY VIABLE AND ACTIVE TEACHERS ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD.

4. HENRI ADDED THAT ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION THE JAPANESE TEACHERS UNION IS ALSO INTERESTED IN JOINING IFFTU AND A FORMAL APPLICATION TO THIS EFFECT WILL BE MADE IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. HE WAS AWARE THAT THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS IS ALREADY AN IFFTU MEMBER AND HOPES THAT THE NEA WITH ITS 1,800,000 MEMBERS WILL COME TO APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDING ITS WEIGHT BEHIND THE IFFTU.

5. IN A DEVELOPMENT WHICH FOR SOME REASON HAS RECEIVED VERY LITTLE PUBLICITY FEN WAS SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING FROM GOF A SPECIAL RECOGNITION AS A REPRESENTATIVE ORGANIZATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, SOMETHING WHICH FEN HAS UNSUCCESSFULLY SOLICITED FOR MANY YEARS. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MEASURE CAN BE JUDGED BY THE FACT THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME FEN WILL SIT AS EQUAL IN SUCH NATIONAL BODIES AS THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, THE MIXED COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE, AND WILL BE

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GIVEN A PROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF SEATS ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL. FURTHERMORE THE FEN WILL BE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE A SHARE OF THE SOME EIGHT MILLION FRANCS WHICH GOES INTO BUDGETS EVERY YEAR FOR DISTRIBUTION TO THE LABOR AND EMPLOYER FEDERATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

6. IN FACT THE FOREGOING MEASURE RAISES FEN TO THE LEVEL OF CONFEDERATION, THEREBY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LABOR GROUPS TO SIX, NAMELY, CGT, CFDT, FO, CGC, CFTC AND FEN. THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF FEN REMAINS, HOWEVER, NAMELY THAT ALL ITS MEMBERS HAVE THE SAME EMPLOYER, NAMELY, THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, ALTHOUGH NOT ALL THE MEMBERS ARE IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION. HENRI HAS SAID THAT FEN IS NOT INTERESTED IN EXPANDING ITS JURISDICTION BY TRYING TO ORGANIZE OUTSIDE THE EDUCATION MINISTRY. HIS WORD SHOULD BE TAKEN ON FACE
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VALUE BECAUSE IF HE EVER ATTEMPTED TO DO OTHERWISE THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS CAN FIGHT BACK EFFECTIVELY, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY WHICH HAS BEEN GOVERNING FEN SINCE THE WAR HAS BEEN THIN AND PRECARIOUS BECAUSE OF SUCCESSFUL INROADS OF COMMUNIST FORCES WHICH NOW CONTROL SNES AND SNESVP, I.E., ORGANIZED PROFESSORS IN SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION.
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